

VICTOR PAUL WIERWILLE

are
the
dead alive
now
?

Are the Dead Alive Now?

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Power for Abundant Living
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The Word's Way
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A RE THE DEAD ALIVE NOW?

Victor Paul Wierwille

American Christian Press
The Way International
New Knoxville, Ohio 45871

Note to reader: All Biblical
quotations are from the King James
Authorized Version

To my oldest son, Donald Ernst – named after my
favorite Greek professor at the University of Chicago
Divinity School and my earthly father, Ernst Wierwille.

Standard Book Number 0-910068-05-4
Library of Congress Catalog Card Number 74-179-279
American Christian Press
The Way International
New Knoxville, Ohio 45871
© The Devin-Adair Co. 1971
© Assigned to The Way International 1973
Published 1971. All rights reserved
Third Printing 1976
Printed in the United States of America

Foreword

Having for so many years personally investigated all fields directly and remotely associated with the subject “Are the Dead Alive Now?” the author presents this Biblical research work with logic, Biblical depth, and spiritual insight. This research may prove controversial but it is surely not untimely with the current teachings of many religious leaders and the experimentation in the psychic world which are finding so-called proofs of survival after death. Laymen and clergy alike are being cogently appealed to and convinced by these supernatural phenomena. Thus, lacking accurate Biblical knowledge, they fall prey to counterfeit phenomena which to the unknowing appear innocent and genuine.

That certain phenomena do occur is obvious to those who care to observe. But on this subject of phenomena the Bible states its case. The Word of God painstakingly divides all things into two realms: the physical and the spiritual. Science and the five-senses man (the Bible calls him the “natural man”) can know and analyze the

physical or material world. But survival after death is a matter dealing exclusively with the spiritual realm and is legitimately not within the scope of science and the natural, scientific, senses-knowledge man. In contradiction to the Biblical teaching that natural man can know only the natural, physical world, a certain so-called scientific group is rising that tries to examine supernatural phenomena. This group calls its power of study extra-sensory perception, the phrase itself expressing the quality of being outside the realm of the senses and thus, logically, outside the scope of science.

What does science know or believe about the existence of two gods? The Bible explicitly shows that supernatural phenomena must come from one of these two antithetical powers whose exclusive domain is the spiritual: (1) the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the true God; or (2) Satan, the god of this world, the false god who would deceive the very elect of the true God if he could. Those who are involved in spiritualism and those who claim scientific controls for study of phenomena, are fooled by the god of this world with stealth and increasing frequency.

The irony of Satan's deception is that although he is the author of sin and death, during seances and ESP experiences it is Satan's power that *counterfeits* the conjured-up dead and makes them *appear* alive and enjoying the Great Hereafter. Auditory and ectoplasmic phenomena of those who have died and now appear alive

elsewhere cannot be sponsored by the God and Father of the Lord Jesus Christ. The Word of God shows that new life to the dead comes with the return of Christ. Before Christ's coming, all those who have died remain in the grave in corruption and unconsciousness. Therefore, if dead person appears to be present in any experience the facsimile of the person is a counterfeit brought on by the deceitful god of this world. We will see more Biblical documentation on this subject as we study in Part II the experience of King Saul during his visit with the Woman of Endor.

Satan and satanic powers is a Biblical study all its own—an extensive topic timely to an age of flooding spiritualism. The laws of the spiritual world of God and Satan are authenticated in the Bible, and thus the author of this work approaches his topic from the most logical and sound of sources. In an age of questioning and questing, a return and a search of the Word of God seems not only reasonable, but in the end, most satisfying.

KAREN W. MARTIN

Somerset, N. J.

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Introduction

Most of us maintain certain beliefs which we unthinkingly accept as true without checking them against the truth of the Word of God. When we find ourselves acting in this mechanical fashion, we must slow down, take inventory of our mental patterns, and see if our beliefs are in agreement with The Word. We as Christians are called of God to study the Word of God to show ourselves approved unto God as workmen who need not to be ashamed of our workmanship, rightly dividing the Word of Truth. So that we may be able to give testimony of the faith of Jesus Christ that is in us, we accept the authority of The Word as the basis of our beliefs and actions.

Those who believe and understand the Bible, the Word of God, know that the Scriptures teach beyond a

shadow of a doubt that it is impossible to reproduce until or before the return of Christ persons who once lived and died. Therefore, only if a person denies the resurrection of Christ and His return can that person believe the dead are now alive it, as the Bible teaches, the dead will not live again until they are raised some time in the future, then it is axiomatic that the dead cannot be alive now.

This research book is dedicated to the presentation of the accuracy of the Biblical text regarding those Scriptures which tell the timing and the significance of death and resurrection. Not the Scriptures, but man's interpretations and mistranslations, coupled with supernatural experiences contrary to God's Word, have muddled the lucidity of Biblical statements. We seek simplicity and clarity once more by returning to the fountainhead of truth and by letting God's Word express itself to us as we absorb it without defending our own preconceived ideas. In the end, God's Word will endure. So if we sincerely want answers and believe in God's authority, we must return to the revelation given in His Word.

Let me make a word of introduction before going into the ensuing study. We must be careful to note that the Word of God does not say of itself that any translation of the Bible is without error. The Word in II Timothy 3:16 proclaims that the original revelation was inspired of God and without mistakes; but in the meantime errors in translation have occurred. Many errors have

crept into the translations of The Word since its first writing. Thus the question becomes: how does one know when his reading the True Word or error—and when an error how to correct it?

First of all, when a passage of the Word of God is not clear or is contradictory with other Scriptures, a student of The Word should look at older, more nearly original texts (such as Estrangelo Aramaic, Hebrew, or Greek) to see if the translation is as clear in English as it was in the earlier texts. Look at the translations of older texts to see if they are more clear.

Secondly, carefully read the entire context of a Scripture. In the text of this work, I often have quoted long Scriptural passages; be sure to read with care and patience the complete context as the surrounding scope of the verse is essential for an understanding. Verses cannot be extracted from their contexts and still project the intended truth.

In the third place in studying unclear or apparently contradictory Scriptures, look for other Scriptures on the given topic. When other Scriptures are clear and agree with one another, we know that the many concurring passages must be correct and the unclear, contradictory passage has had error creep into it through the ages. We must adhere to the truth of the many clear passages and look for the translation errors in the apparently contradictory verse or verses.

Finally—and perhaps I should have noted this as the

first key—we should look into our minds to see if we are reading exactly what is stated or, perhaps, whether we are reading into the words or between the lines. This is a major source for our lack of understanding of the accuracy of the Word of God. Only when our minds understand The Word as it is written—with proper translation, seeing the verse in its context, and having all verses on a given topic concur—do we have what I constantly refer to as the *Word of God*. No version or translation approaches perfection in representing the inspired, original Word of God, and therefore we as students must be especially diligent in seeking the truth, errorless truth, of the original, God-breathed Word.

In this text of “Are the Dead Alive Now,” I have begun by giving the many concurring Scriptures which tell that all who die before the return of Christ are dead until His second coming, otherwise there would be no need for His return. The Word of God shows that the return of Christ (called in Greek *parousia*) has two parts. The first part is His coming *for* His Church, the Body of Christ. This is called the gathering together. At that time the dead in Christ will be raised incorruptible and the living believers will “put on immortality.” The second part of the *parousia* is Christ’s coming *with* His Church of the Body upon the earth: During this period, which is also called *apokalupsis* (revelation, revealing, making manifest, unveiling), occurs the resurrections of

all believers (exclusive of the Body of Christ) and all unbelievers.

After observing the basic teaching of The Word, I then examine several unclear and seemingly contradictory Scriptures on death and resurrection. These passages include the following: (1) Paul’s expression in Philippians 1, saying, “For to me to live *is* Christ, and to die a gain; (2) Paul’s expression in II Corinthians 5 where he says, “. . . rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord”; (3) the vision of what is commonly known as the Transfiguration from Matthew 17; (4) the translation of Enoch so that he should not see death as recorded in Hebrews 11; (5) the parable of Lazarus in Abraham’s bosom from Luke 16; (6) the account of Jesus and the one malefactor on the day of crucifixion when Jesus said, as recorded in Luke 23, “Verily I say unto thee, To day shalt thou be with me in paradise”; (7) the example in Matthew 22 about the woman who had seven husbands; (8) the account in I Samuel 28 of the prophetess of Endor. After these Scriptures are examined, an appendix is included for further study into the intricately accurate usage of other terms and topics related to “are the dead alive now?” The appendix includes a study of the whole man—body, soul, and spirit; a word study of the difference between “to kill” and “to destroy”; various translations of words concerning graves and burial; and an itemized list of

specific words on death, destruction, and hell with their meanings and various English translations.

After such an investigation and study, the Biblical revelation on the topic “Are the Dead Alive Now?” will stand forth in its clarity and consistency.

PART I

THE THESIS

CHAPTER ONE

Are the Dead Alive Now?

Most Christians hold the belief that upon death those who belong to Christ are immediately received up into glory, commonly called Heaven or paradise, to appear before the Father. There they are alive and conscious and have a joyous existence with Him and their loved ones. Such a belief is contrary to the teachings in the Word of God. For if a person immediately after expiring is taken to eternal bliss, why is the return of Christ and/or the resurrection necessary? If after death the Christian is already alive and with Him, why should Christ return to gather His Church?

If death is the entrance to eternal happiness with the Lord, then death is not an enemy but a welcomed friend. If death brings us into the immediate presence of Christ, then the Scriptures are void our believing vain. But

death is *not* a friend as I Corinthians 15:26 pointedly states: “The last enemy *that* shall be destroyed *is* death.” The enemy death will some day be destroyed but obviously it is not yet, as witnessed by the fact that funeral directors are not lacking for business.

Since death has not been destroyed and since those who have died are not already alive and in Heaven, where are the dead? What is “death”?

The word *death* in the Bible is the Greek word *thanatos*, which is defined as “the natural end of earthly human existence.” *Thanatos* is not merely an instantaneous occurrence when one expires but a continuing state. Release from this continuing state of death hinges upon the return of Christ.*

If release from death comes with the return of Christ, where are the dead until that time? The Bible says that they are in the “grave” (*hadēs* in Greek; *sheol* in Hebrew.) These words are interchangeably translated “hell,” “grave,” and “pit” *Hadēs* or *sheol* is never the place of destruction;† it is always the continuing state

* I Thessalonians 4: 16 17: “For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive *and* remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.”

I Corinthians 15:12, 13: “Now if Christ be preached that he rose from the dead, how say some among you that there is no resurrection of the dead? But if there be no resurrection of the dead, then is Christ not risen.”

† *Gehenna* in Greek, which is *ghi-hinnom* in Hebrew, is also translated “hell” but is not the grave (*hadēs* or *sheol*.) *Gehenna* is the place of destruction, hell-fire. The word comes from the valley of Hinnom

of the dead. The most accurate translation of *hadēs* and *sheol* would be “gravedom.” Gravedom is the state in which all dead dwell; it is not a *qeber*, a spot where the body is buried on land or sea. The Biblical description of gravedom (the kingdom of all those in the grave—the dead), *sheol* or *hadēs*, is a place where there is no consciousness and thus no remembrance.

PSALMS 6:5:

For in death *there is* no remembrance of thee. . . .

PSALMS 146:4:

His breath goeth forth, he returneth to his earth; in that very day his thoughts perish.

ECCLESIASTES 9:5, 6, 10:

For the living know that they shall die: but the dead know not any thing neither have they any more a reward; for the memory of them is forgotten.

Also, their love, and their hatred, and their envy, is now perished; neither have they any more a portion for ever in any *thing* that is done under the sun.

Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do *it* with thy might; for *there is* no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave, whither thou goest.

Because there is no consciousness in death, there is no awareness of time for the dead person. Thus the moment of a man’s death becomes, *in a sense of time*

where carrion is forever burning. (See Joshua 15:8 Matthew 13:39. 40; Luke 17:29, 30; Matthew 25:41.)

for him, the moment of the return of Christ. But *within the dimension of time*, the moment of a man's death is *neither* his gathering together unto Christ *nor* his resurrection. In a sense of time he does not go immediately to Heaven, but descends into gravedom, *sheol*.

PSALMS 89:48:

What man *is he that* liveth, and shall not see death? shall he deliver his soul from the hand of the grave [*sheol*]?

PSALMS 16:10:

For thou wilt not leave my soul in hell [*sheol*]. . . .

PSALMS 49:15:

But God will redeem [to rescue by resurrection] my soul from the power of the grave [*sheol*]. . . .

JOB 21:13:

They spend their days in wealth, and in a moment go down to the grave [*sheol*].

In every one of these Scriptures the Hebrew word *sheol* is used. Interesting to note is that the beasts go to *sheol* too.

PSALMS 49:12, 14:

Nevertheless man *being* in honour abideth not: he is like the beasts that perish.

Like sheep that are laid in the grave [*sheol*]; death shall feed on them. . . .

Jesus Christ likewise descended into gravedom when He died. If anyone should have gone to Heaven imme-

diately after death, surely it should have been Jesus. But even He went to *sheol* or *hadēs*. For three days and three nights He had no consciousness, as Matthew 12 and Acts 2 state.

MATTHEW 12:40:

For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.

ACTS 2:30, 31, 32:

. . . He [God] would raise up Christ to sit on his throne;

He seeing this before spake of the resurrection of Christ, that his soul was not left in hell [*hadēs*], neither his flesh did see corruption.

This Jesus hath God raised up. . . .

Just as all men who die, Jesus also went to *hadēs*. What then happens in *hadēs*? All is corruption and decay.

GENESIS 3:19:

. . . For of dust thou *art* and unto dust shalt thou return.

ACTS 13:36:

For David, after he had served his own generation by the will of God fell on sleep, and was laid unto his fathers, and saw corruption.

As all who go to the grave, Jesus too would have totally decayed if God had not raised Him from the dead.

Acts 13:34, 35:

And as concerning that he raised him up from the dead *now* no more to return to corruption . . .

Wherefore he saith also in another psalm, Thou shalt not suffer thine Holy One to see corruption [total decay].

God raised Jesus Christ from *hadēs* and its corruption. If He had not been raised, Jesus Christ would not be coming back again; and without His coming back, there would never be a release for *any* of mankind—Christian and non-Christian, saved and unsaved—from gravedom and corruption therein.

HEBREWS 9:27, 28:

And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment:

So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation [wholeness].

The time element between the word *die*, in verse 27, and the word *but* is the time span between a man's death and his being raised.

Salvation, meaning "wholeness," of verse 28 is the deliverance from corruption which will occur when Christ returns for the gathering together and the first resurrection of mankind. The dead are not alive to have wholeness now, for man does not have immortality now. We are yet subject to die and corrupt in the grave. When do we have immortality? With the second coming of Christ. Until that time, all who have died are not in Heaven; they are in *hadēs*, gravedom. Death is not a

friend bringing us into the presence of Christ and our loved ones; it is a blatant enemy, for in death all go to gravedom.

Not now but some day, death shall be destroyed. Then the dead in Christ will have a new body—this time an incorruptible body and the living believers will have an immortal body.

I CORINTHIANS 15:53–57:

For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal [living at the time] *must* put on immortality.

So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory.

O death, where *is* thy sting? O grave, where *is* thy victory?

The sting of death *is* sin; and the strength of sin *is* the law.

But thanks *be* to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Death would end life forever for all humanity were it not for Christ's resurrection and thus His return to gather and resurrect mankind. It is then—with the return of Christ—that we have victory over death. Then we have immortality and incorruption. Until that time, the dead remain in gravedom in corruption and unconsciousness.

CHAPTER TWO

When Shall the Dead be Made Alive?

(THE RETURN OF CHRIST)

I Corinthians 15 is the basic Scripture in understanding the resurrections and the return of Christ. The chapter begins by telling of Christ's being raised by God after Christ was in *hadēs* for three days and three nights. The Word substantiates Christ's rising by pointing out the witnesses who saw the resurrected Christ. The Word then asks, after showing such proofs of the risen Christ, "How can we not believe in the resurrection since Christ did arise?"

I CORINTHIANS 15:3:

For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures;

VERSE 4:

And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures:

VERSE 5:

And that he was seen of Cephas, then of the twelve:

VERSE 6:

After that, he was seen of above five hundred brethren at once; of whom the greater part remain unto this present, but some are fallen asleep.

VERSE 7:

After that, he was seen of James; then of all the apostles.

VERSE 8:

And last of all he was seen of me also, as of one born out of due time.

VERSE 12:

Now if Christ be preached that he rose [out] from [among] the dead, how say some among you that there is no resurrection of the dead?

VERSE 13:

But if there be no resurrection of the dead, then is Christ not risen.

VERSE 14:

And if Christ be not risen, then *is* our preaching vain, and your faith *is* also vain.

VERSE 15:

Yea, and we are found false witnesses of God [if we preach that He was raised and he was not;] because we have testified of God that he raised up Christ: whom he raised not up, if so be that the dead rise not.

VERSE 16:

For if the dead rise not, then is not Christ raised.

VERSE 17:

And if Christ be not raised, your faith [believing] *is* vain; ye are yet in your sins.

VERSE 18:

Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished.

VERSE 19:

If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable.

Paul has carefully debated and proved his thesis: that the hope of mankind is the resurrection of Christ. In order for the ascended Christ to return, He has to have risen. Without this crucial event, our believing is in vain, our teaching is false, and we are most wretched for we have no hope for a future life. But fortunately, our believing is not vain, our teaching not false, and we are most hopeful because Christ did rise.

Since Christ did rise, when shall He return? Matthew 24:3 and 6 gives the record of the disciples asking Jesus Christ about His personal return and the end of time.

MATTHEW 24:3

. . . Tell us, when shall these things be? and what *shall be* the sign of thy coming, and of the end [*sunteleia*, moving towards the final point, *telos*] of the world [age]?

VERSE 6

. . . for all *these things* must come to pass, but the end [*telos*, final point] is not yet.

The word coming in Matthew 24:3 is the Greek word *parousia*, translated in the Bible as “coming” and “presence,” and always indicates the personal presence of the person spoken of.* To understand Christ’s second coming, we should look at His first coming. Micah 5:2 indicates Christ’s coming forth from Bethlehem (which event is recorded in Matthew 2:1) while Zechariah 9:9 indicates Christ’s coming unto Jerusalem (which event is recorded in Matthew 21:1–10). The events between and including Christ’s birth and His ascension is His *first* coming. And, just as Christ’s first coming spanned a period of time, so does his second coming, the *parousia*.

The events of the end (*sunteleia*) include: (1) Christ’s coming *for* His saints, (2) the events of the book of Revelation with Christ’s coming *with* His saints, (3) the first and second resurrections, and finally (4) the end (*telos*) when death is destroyed and all things are subdued to God.

Christ’s second coming has two basic phases. The two parts of the *parousia* must be clearly distinguished to avoid serious error. With these two phases all the dead shall be made alive and the living believers made immortal.

* The following Scriptures are all the places in the New Testament where the word *parousia* used. Note that it is not only used of Christ’s coming for His Church; but it always shows the personal presence of the one spoken of: Matthew 24:3, 27, 37, 39; I Corinthians 15:23; 16:17; II Corinthians 7:6, 7; 10:10; Philippians 1:26; 2:12; I Thessalonians 2:19; 3:13; 4:15; 5:23; II Thessalonians 2:1, 8, 9; James 5:7,8; 11 Peter 1:16; 3:4, 12; I John 2:28.

1. Christ’s Return for His Church, The Body The Gathering Together

The part of the *parousia*, return, of Christ *for* His Church is called in II Thessalonians 2:1 “our gathering together unto him.” First of all, one must note that the gathering together affects only those who are born again of God* during the age of the Church of the Body, which age is the period between the day of Pentecost and the first part of the *parousia*. The unsaved of the Church of the Body period and all others before and after the Church Age will be resurrected when Christ comes *with* His saints. No unbelievers are affected by the part of the *parousia* of Christ *for* His Church, nor are the Old Testament saints, nor the Church of the Bride.

The order of events in the return of Christ *for* His Church of the Body was revealed to Paul and is recorded in I Thessalonians 4, and I Corinthians 15.

I THESSALONIANS 4:13–18:

But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope.

For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him.

*Romans 10:9,10: “That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.”

For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive *and* remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent [precede] them which are asleep.

For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first:

Then we which are alive *and* remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.

Wherefore comfort one another with these words.

This first part of the *parousia* is never technically called a resurrection, not even in verse 16 which says, "...and the dead in Christ shall rise first." The reason it is not referred to as a resurrection is that some believers will be alive at the time of this portion of His coming and naturally will not then need to be raised from the dead. Those who are alive will be caught up in the clouds along with those believers who have just previously been raised from the dead to meet the Lord in the air. With this coming of Christ *for* His Church, He will not come on the earth; He will simply gather the dead and living of the Church of the Body. I Corinthians 15 corroborates these events.

I CORINTHIANS 15:51-54:

Behold, I shew you a mystery: We shall not all sleep [not all will be dead at Christ's return] but we [the members of the Church] shall all be changed.

In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we [which are alive at His return] shall be changed.

For this corruptible [the dead of the Church of the Body] must put on incorruption. and this mortal [the living of the Church of the Body] *must* put on immortality.

So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written: Death is swallowed up in victory.

When the mortals have put on immortality and the dead and corrupted ones have been raised incorruptible, all shall have a new body, as is set forth earlier in chapter 15 of I Corinthians. The natural body, the body a person has before the return of Christ, has its limitations; but the spiritual body that He gives at His return is like His resurrected body—unlimited in scope and activity.

I CORINTHIANS 15:44:

It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body.

VERSE 45:

And so it is written, The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam [Jesus Christ] *was made* a quickening spirit.

VERSE 46:

Howbeit that *was* not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; and afterward that which is spiritual.

VERSE 47:

The first man *is* of the earth, earthy: the second man *is* the Lord from heaven.

VERSE 48:

As *is* the earthy, such *are* they also that are earthy: and as *is* the heavenly, such *are* they also that are heavenly.

VERSE 49:

And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly.

VERSE 50:

Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption.

Our fleshly body is a natural body. But with the gathering together, we shall have a new look, a new type of body—a spiritual body. Until Christ comes, the dead remain in *hadēs* with corrupted physical bodies and unconsciousness.

2. Christ's Return *With* His Church

The Resurrections

The coming of Christ *with* His saints to the earth is also part of the *parousia* but is solely related to “the Lord’s Day.” * This part of the *parousia* must definitely

* The “day of the Lord” or the “Lord’s Day” is not a day of the

be distinguished from the first part of the *parousia* when Christ comes *for* His Church. The coming of Christ *with* His saints, called in Greek *apokalupsis* is the “appearing,” “revelation,” “the advent,” and “the day of the Lord.” The day of the Lord includes the period of God’s judgments. The Church of the Body will never have to endure this experience for it shall already have been gathered together. It would be no comfort if we had to pass through the tribulation of the revelation period. Furthermore if the gathering together is confused with the resurrection, then the whole Church of the Body would have to go through the tribulation. Because Church of the Body will not be on earth during the tribulation period, I Thessalonians says, “. . . comfort one another with these words.”

That believers of the Church of the Body will be spared the tribulation, spoken of in Revelation, is disclosed several times in the Epistles. II Thessalonians 2 is one example.

II THESSALONIANS 2:1–3:

Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and *by* our gathering together unto him.

That ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand.

week but the day when the Lord from heaven does the judging. It is set in opposition to “Man’s Day” (I Corinthians 4:3) which is during the age of the Church of the Body which is now when men do the judging.

Let no man deceive you by any means: for *that day shall not come*, except there come a falling away first [properly translated, “a falling away first” is “the gathering together”],* and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition.

The Church will be departed and *with* Christ before the wrath of the day of God’s judgment comes to pass. The following passages also substantiate this truth.

ROMANS 8:1:

There is therefore now no condemnation [*katakrima*, judgment] to them which are in Christ. . . .

I THESSALONIANS 1:10:

And to wait for his Son from Heaven, whom he raised from the dead, *even* Jesus, which delivered us from the wrath to come.

ROMANS 5:9:

Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him.

* The Geneva Bible and the Cranmer Bible, first published in 1537. and the Tyndale Bible published in 1539 preceding the King James translation, all translate “a falling away first.” “a departure first.”

Before the “day of the Lord,” there must be a departure of the born-again believers from this world to be with Christ. After this will come to pass that the “man of sin be revealed” which will then be followed by “the day of wrath.”

In II Thessalonians 2:3, the Greek words are *hē apostasia*.

The word *hē* is the article “the.” The prefix *apo* means “away from.” Having a circle, *apo* would be illustrated as a line in motion from the exterior of the circle to some distant point. *Stasia* means “to separate,” or “draw out.” *Hē apostasia* is a separation away from, or a drawing out from among; it is the departure.

At this part of the *parousia* of Christ, the Church will already have been judged, not for punishment but for rewards. II Corinthians 5:10, in reference to the *parousia* for the Church, says, “For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ. . . .” This judgment seat is the *bēma*, the *place*, from which prizes and rewards are given for “the things done. . . .”

The Church of the Body appears before the *bēma* of Christ to receive the “crown of righteousness,” “rewards” for deeds done for the faithfulness of our stewardship for Him. We appear before the *bēma* of Christ not to receive God’s sentences of wrath of condemnation, but to “have praise of God.” None of God’s born-again children in Christ will ever be judged as to their standing or anything else for they have already been judged in the Person of their substitute and mediator, Christ Jesus. (John 5:24; 3:17, 18; I Corinthians 11:32; Romans 8:33, 34; I Thessalonians 1:10; 5:9.)

In the day of the Lord’s judgment when all people have been resurrected,* everyone (except the Church of the Body) will appear before the judgment seat, the bench from which God’s judgment sentences will be pronounced.

II Thessalonians 1:7–10 tells some of the events which will occur when Christ comes *with* His Church.

* “For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.” (I Corinthians 15:22).

And to you who are [were] troubled rest [are at rest] with us, when [at the time] the Lord Jesus shall be revealed [*apokalupsis*] from heaven with his mighty angels [*angelon dunameos*, meaning “messengers of His power,” both angels and Church saints].

In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ:

Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power;

When [after] he shall [have] come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe (because our testimony among you was believed) in that day.

These words could not be more plain. They definitely do not deal with the *parousia* of Christ for His Church, but with the appearing of Christ later at the revelation appearing, *apokalupsis*, of Himself on the earth. If we read the Scriptures relating to the coming of Christ for His Church and interpret them of the coming of Christ with His Church to the earth, we remain ignorant of the blessed hope* and find ourselves fearful and frustrated.

When Christ returns with His gathered saints, there will be two resurrections, one for the just and another for the unjust.

JOHN 5:28, 29:

Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice,

* Titus 2: 13: “Looking for the blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ.”

And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation.

ACTS 24:15:

And have hope toward God, Which they themselves also allow, that there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust.

LUKE 14:14:

... For thou shalt be recompensed at the resurrection of the just.

HEBREWS 11:35:

... That, they might obtain a better [the first resurrection of the Just] resurrection.

The first resurrection is for the just; the second for the unjust. A period of time intervenes between these two. Revelation 20, a vision to John about the latter days, tell about the time gap and explains many other events of the *sunteleia*, the last times near the very end.

VERSE 1:

And I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand.

VERSE 2:

And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years,

VERSE 3:

And cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the na-

tions no more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled: and after that he must be loosed a little season.

VERSE 4:

And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years.

VERSE 5:

But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This *is* the first resurrection.

VERSE 6:

Blessed and holy *is* he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years.

VERSE 7:

And when the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison.

VERSE 8:

And shall go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle: the number of whom *is* as the sand of the sea.

VERSE 9:

And they went up on the breadth of the earth, and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city:

and fire came down from God out of heaven, and devoured them.

VERSE 10:

And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever.

VERSE 11:

And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them.

VERSE 12:

And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is *the book* of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works.

VERSE 13:

And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell [*hadēs*] delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works.

VERSE 14:

And death and hell [*hadēs*] were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death.

VERSE 15:

And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.

By verse 13 of Revelation 20 all the dead shall have been resurrected. Once again looking at I Corinthians 15, the condensed verses about the return of Christ with its various phases are more clearly understood.

I CORINTHIANS 15:22:

For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.*

When shall *all* be made alive? Those who have died during the administration of the Church of the Body shall be made alive when Christ comes *for* His Church. All others will be made alive when Christ comes *with* His Church. Between the first resurrection and the second one is a time lapse. Some Bible scholars say 1,000 years. But the first and second resurrections will make “all alive” and all will be judged.

VERSE 24:

Then *cometh* the end [*telos*, the final-most point], when he shall have delivered up the kingdom of God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power.

When this time comes, all shall have been judged—sentences passed, rewards given—and there will be a new Heaven and a new earth where there is no more

*Verse 22 is sometimes wrongly used to prove that all people are ultimately going to be saved and everyone will be with Christ. *All without exception* shall “be made alive,” but not *all* will have the reward of going to Heaven.

sin, sickness, or dying. At that time He shall be King of kings and Lord of lords.

VERSE 25:

For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet.

VERSE 26:

The last enemy *that* shall be destroyed *is* death.

When death is destroyed, we can ask, “O, death where is thy sting?” When the prophecy of Revelation 20:14 comes to pass which says, “And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire,” then death will have been destroyed and thus have no sting.

VERSE 27:

For he hath put all things under his feet. . . .

VERSE 28:

And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all.

By the time that God is all in all, the Church will have been gathered and rewarded; the just and the unjust shall have been resurrected and judged for rewards and punishments; and, finally, death destroyed. Only on these three occasions—the gathering together, the first and the second resurrections—will the dead be made alive.

PART II

MISUNDERSTOOD SCRIPTURES

The problems evolved relating to the question “do the dead live now before the return of Christ or are the dead dead until the return?” have been mainly brought to us by spiritualists, philosophers, theologians, expositors, and teachers who wrongly divide the Word of God. What we want to know accurately and Biblically substantiate is: are the dead dead or are they alive now?

We certainly have an abundance of Scripture proving that when men die they are dead until the return of Christ. But our minds have been confused because we recall a number of controversial passages of Scripture which have been wrongly taught not heeding the Biblical precept of “. . . rightly dividing the word of truth.”

CHAPTER THREE

Is Death a Gain?

(*PHILIPPIANS 1:12-27*)

The most frequently misconstrued Scripture that a person is alive after death is perhaps Philippians 1 in which record Paul addresses the followers of Christ.

PHILIPPIANS 1:12:

But I would ye should understand, brethren, that the things *which happened* unto me have fallen out rather unto the furtherance of the gospel;

VERSE 13:

So that my bonds in Christ are manifest in all the palace, and in all other *places*;

VERSE 14:

And may of the brethren in the Lord, waxing confident by my bonds, are much more bold to speak the word without fear.

VERSE 15:

Some indeed preach Christ even of envy and strife; and some also of good will:

VERSE 16:

The one preach Christ of contention, not sincerely, supposing to add affliction to my bonds:

VERSE 17:

But the other of love, knowing that I am set for the defence of the gospel.

VERSE 18:

What then? notwithstanding, every way, whether in pretence, or in truth, Christ is preached; and I therein do rejoice, yea, and will rejoice.

VERSE 19:

For I know that this shall turn to my salvation through your prayer, and the supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ.

VERSE 20:

According to my earnest expectation and *my* hope, that in nothing I shall be ashamed, but *that* with all boldness, as always, *so* now also Christ shall be magnified in my body, whether *it be* by life, or by death.

VERSE 21:

For to me to live is Christ, and to die *is* gain.

VERSE 22:

But if I live in the flesh, this *is* the fruit of my labour: yet what I shall choose I wot [know] not.

VERSE 23:

For I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ; which is far better:

VERSE 24:

Nevertheless to abide in the flesh *is* more needful for you.

VERSE 25:

And having this confidence, I know that I shall abide and continue with you all for your furtherance and joy of faith.

VERSE 26:

That your rejoicing may be more abundant in Jesus Christ for me by my coming to you again.

VERSE 27:

Only let your conversation be as it becometh the gospel of Christ: that whether I come and see you or else be absent, I may hear of your affairs, that ye stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel.

The passage from verse 21 to 24 has caused confusion. Verse 23 is misinterpreted to say that when one dies he immediately departs to be with Christ which is far better than living. That this is a misrendering of the text is plainly visible when we rightly divide the Word of Truth.

We must apply a cardinal rule here: when there is an abundant number of Scriptural passages clearly stating a specific tenet, and then one passage which is apparently contradictory to this tenet, we must study that contradictory verse or verses most carefully. We dare not hold the one unclear verse and discard the plain teaching of the many passages. Yet, that is exactly what has been done regarding certain contradictory verses

and we have cast out the many lucid verses which explicitly teach that when a man dies he is dead until the return of Christ.

From only a cursory reading of verse 23, the verse would seem to stand in opposition to the many Scriptures which are very plain and clear. "For I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ; which is far better. . . ."

In Paul's statement one must first note that the subject of this passage of the Word of God is of the Gospel and its furtherance: in verse 12, ". . . unto the furtherance of the gospel;" in verse 18, ". . . notwithstanding . . . whether . . . God is preached; . . . in truth or in pretence. . . ." (Paul is thankful that the name of Christ is preached, which is the furtherance of the Gospel.) In verse 25, the last phrase, ". . . for your furtherance and joy of faith . . ." is the furtherance of the joy and faith of the Gospel. Verse 26, "That your rejoicing may be more abundant in Jesus Christ . . ." is again the furtherance of the Gospel, as is also verse 27, ". . . becometh the Gospel of Christ . . . striving together for the faith of the Gospel."

In the verses we are considering, the Scripture is teaching the furtherance of the Gospel; it is not a question of Paul's own furtherance. The truth of the Gospel and its furtherance is set forth and taught plainly in verses 13 through 18. Paul indicates that some preach Christ of envy and strife, some sincerely, but Paul cares only

that the name of Jesus Christ is proclaimed. Likewise, Paul according to verse 21, wants the Gospel to be furthered as he magnifies Christ in his body. Verse 21, "For to me to live is Christ and to die is gain . . ." So long as it was for Christ's gain, the furtherance of the Gospel, it was immaterial to Paul whether it should be by his living outside of prison or by his death in prison.

Verse 22 says, "But if I live in the flesh, this [the work that I am doing] is the fruit of my labour. . . ." The fruit of Paul's labor was the furthering of the Gospel by preaching Christ. ". . . Yet what I shall choose I wot [know] not." On the surface, as the verse reads in the Authorized King James Version, it seems to indicate that Paul was in a dilemma, not knowing which choice to make. ". . . what I shall choose I wot not." The word translated "I wot" is *gnōrizō* used 24 times in the A.V.: 16 times "to make known"; 4 times "declare"; 1 each "to do wit" "certify," "give to understand" and "wot."

Thus clearly *gnōrizō* means "to make known." Paul did know that his choice really was. The context indicates that while Paul's personal preference was in one direction, his decision had to benefit others for Christ's gain.

Verse 23 is parenthetical, that is a figure of speech used as addition to further explain the information already given. Verse 23 is a legitimate grammatical insertion, an expression used as the Holy Spirit's marking of that which is important in the Word. Therefore, verse 24

must be read immediately after verse 22 for true sequence. “Nevertheless to abide in the flesh *is* more needful for you.”

What does Paul mean in verse 23 when he says, “I am in a strait”? These words are a translation of *sunechō* occurring n 2 times in the A.V.* The word means to be “held in tightly” or “constrained” because of external situations. Paul was constrained by reason of three choices:

1. Christ’s gain, the furtherance of the Gospel by his being in prison.
2. Christ’s gain, the furtherance of the Gospel by his being out of prison with the believers.
3. “. . . having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ; which is far better” than the furtherance of the Gospel in prison or out.

Verse 23 being a parenthesis is inserted for emphasis. The question is: what does verse 23 emphasize? The Apostle Paul did know whether to choose to live or to die; but he was faced with a third alternative, which was better than either living or dying. That alternative was the *parousia* of Christ at which time Paul would be with Christ in his changed body. So the Apostle Paul concluded in verse 24 that it would be much better for the believers, since the *parousia* had not occurred, for him

* Matthew 4:24; Luke 4:38; 8:37, 45; 12:50; 19:43; 22:63; Acts 7:57; 18:5; 28:8; II Corinthians 5:14.

to get out of prison and to continue boldly fighting for the furtherance of the Gospel. But neither one of these choices, living for Christ’s gain or dying in prison for Christ’s gain, would be as good as Christ’s return, which would be best of all.

The word *depart* in verse 23 is in the Greek the word *analuō*. It is used only once in another passage in the Bible, namely in Luke 12:36: “. . . when he will return from the wedding . . .” In Luke, *analuō* is translated “return.” Thus the word *analuō* does not mean “to depart” in the sense of leaving the place where one is, but it is a return to the place which was left. The word *analuō* does not mean to depart in the sense of starting off from his place and going to another place, but it means to return to the place which has been left earlier. This gives as the absolute meaning of the word *analuō* without my private interpretation. The Apostle Paul was longing and waiting for the return of Christ when he would be with Him.

It is must enlightening to note II Timothy 4:6.

For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departures at hand.

The word *departure* is the Greek noun *analysis*, and again means “returning.” “For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my ‘returning to dust’* is at

* Genesis 3:19: “. . . dust thou *art*, and unto dust shalt thou return.”

hand.” For further corroboration which can be checked in any good concordance, the words translated “depart” occur around 130 times in the New Testament. It is translated from no less than 22 different Greek words. But the word *analuō* occurs only twice: in one verse it is rendered “depart” and in the other it is translated “return.”

Certainly the convincing evidence in harmony with the rest of the Scripture is that Paul was now talking about and reporting to them the best alternative of all the return of Christ. With Christ’s return, Paul would not have to live or die for the furtherance of the Gospel but would be changed to his immortal body. This would have been the best of all choices.

CHAPTER FOUR

Absent From the Body, Present With the Lord?

(II CORINTHIANS 3:8 AND 9)

A major complication regarding “Are the Dead Alive Now?” is found in II Corinthians 5. Herein is found an expression of Paul’s which has become a stumbling block.

II CORINTHIANS 5:8:

We are confident, *I say*, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord.

Verse 9:

Wherefore we labour, that, whether present or absent, we may be accepted of him.

The phrase in verse 8 “. . . willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord” has brought error into people’s thinking. It is most frequently construed to say that when a person is absent

from the body, he is automatically and immediately present with the Lord. Most people who quote “absent from the body, present with the Lord” are surprised when they find out this is not at all what the verse says. It says, “we are . . . WILLING rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord”—which is very different.

The focus of II Corinthians 4: 14 through II Corinthians 5:21 is on the subject of the return of Christ, and not particularly on death.

II CORINTHIANS 4:14:

Knowing that he which raised up the Lord Jesus shall raise up us also by Jesus, and shall present *us* with you.

God will raise us up and present us. Paul reinforces this truth four verses later.

II CORINTHIANS 4: 18:

While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen *are* temporal; but the things which are not seen *are* eternal.

Paul says we do not look at the things which are seen; we look at the things which are not seen. Death is seen, but the return has not yet been seen.

II CORINTHIANS 5:1:

For we know that if our earthly house of *this* tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.

VERSE 2:

For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven:

VERSE 3:

If so be that being clothed we shall not be found naked.

VERSE 4:

For we that are in *this* tabernacle do groan, being burdened: not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life.

Paul is speaking of the return: not to die or to be unclothed, as it says in verse 4, but to be clothed upon our glorious body at His return. The same is recorded in I Thessalonians 4:17.

Then we which are alive *and* remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so [*houtos*, in this manner, by His return] shall we ever be with the Lord.

The return of Christ is the enveloping context of II Corinthians 5:8, which says,

We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body [so long as we are in the body, the return has not come so we are naturally absent from the Lord] and to be present with the Lord.

When will we “be present with the Lord”? At the *parousia*, the return.

This strong hope of the return of Christ which Paul had, knowing that not until he was clothed upon with that body of glory could he be with Christ, permeates the entire section of II Corinthians 4:8–5:4. There is never any thought of attaining the state of “being with Christ” apart from Christ’s return. Believers will only be present with the Lord when they are “clothed upon” with their new spiritual body.

Present with the Lord without a new spiritual body via the return of Christ is unscriptural and savours of theosophy. For who can look or wait for the Saviour according to Philippians,* if he is already with Him or who would need the changing of his body if he has already been present with the Lord in glory for years?

*Philippians 3: 20, 21: “For our conversation is in heaven from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself.

CHAPTER FIVE

The Vision at the Transfiguration

(MATTHEW 17:1-9)

Another major thorny point regarding “Are the Dead Alive Now?” is the so-called Transfiguration, as recorded in Matthew 17. Jesus went to the Mount of Transfiguration to ponder His ministry and, specifically, His death.

MATTHEW 17:1:

After six days Jesus taketh Peter, James, and John his brother, and bringeth them up into an high mountain apart,

VERSE 2:

And was transfigured [changed in appearance] before them: and his face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light.

VERSE 3:

And, behold, there appeared unto them Moses and Elias [Elijah] talking with them.

VERSE 4:

Then answered Peter, and said unto Jesus, Lord, it is good for us to be here: if thou wilt, let us make here three tabernacles; one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias.

VERSE 5:

While he yet spake, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them: and behold a voice out of the cloud, which said, this is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him.

VERSE 6:

And when the disciples heard *it*, they fell on their face, and were sore afraid.

VERSE 7:

And Jesus came and touched them, and said, Arise, and be not afraid.

VERSE 8:

And when they had lifted up their eyes, they saw no man, save Jesus only.

VERSE 9:

And as they came down from the mountain, Jesus charged them, saying, Tell the vision to no man, until the Son of man be risen again from the dead.

The key word is *appeared* in the third verse—"and, behold, there appeared unto them Moses and Elias talking with him." The word translated *appeared* is in the Greek *optomai* which means "seeing objectively" or "envisioning," while ordinarily the word *blepō*, which means "using the eyes to look at," would be used. Peter, James,

and John did not see this phenomenon with their eyes but rather their minds. The eye-sense was completely by-passed.

Verse 9 says that the phenomenon was "a vision." The words "trance" and "vision" in the Bible do not have the meanings or implications that modern spiritualists and psychics try to say. First of all, the words "trance" and "vision" are used synonymously. Proof of this is found in Acts 10:10 where the word "trance" is used and in verse 17 the word "vision." A trance or vision is never loss of consciousness. It is like a dormant state of mental activity, when God by revelation—word of knowledge, word of wisdom and discerning of spirits—gives a panoramic picture of the scene.

God simply gave a vision of Moses and Elijah to Jesus, who had gone up on the mountain to consider His death. Moses and Elijah were not alive or made alive by God to keep a rendezvous with Jesus Christ on the Mount of Transfiguration for Joshua 1:2 declares that "Moses my servant is dead." Elijah was also dead, although a closer look at Elijah's death is warranted. Elijah's record is given in II Kings 1 and II Chronicles 21. For our immediate purpose, let us only check II Kings 2 at this time.

II KINGS 2:1:

And it came to pass, when the Lord would take up Elijah into heaven, by a whirlwind, that Elijah went with Elisha from Gilgal.

VERSE 3:

And the sons of the prophets that *were* at Bethel came forth to Elisha, and said unto him, Knowest thou that the Lord will take away thy master from thy head to day? And he said, Yea, I know *it*; hold ye your peace.

VERSE 7:

And fifty men of the sons of the prophets went, and stood to view afar off: and they two stood by Jordan.

VERSE 8:

And Elijah took his mantle, and wrapped it together, and smote the waters, and they were divided hither and thither, so that they two went over on dry ground.

VERSE 11:

And it came to pass, as they still went on, and talked, that, behold, *there appeared* a chariot of fire, and horses of fire, and parted them both asunder; and Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven.

VERSE 16:

And they said unto him [Elisha], Behold now, there be with thy servants fifty strong men; let them go, we pray thee, and seek thy master: lest peradventure the Spirit of the Lord hath taken him up, and cast him upon some mountain, or into some valley. And he said, Ye shall not send.

VERSE 17:

And when they urged him till he was ashamed, he said, Send. They sent therefore fifty men; and they sought three days, but found him not.

VERSE 18:

And when they came again to him, (for he tarried at Jericho,) he said unto them, Did I not say unto you, Go not?

Elijah and Elisha moved ahead over the Jordan at Jericho. While the fifty sons of the prophets and Elisha watched, Elijah was taken up into heaven as The Word discloses. However, this “taken up” cannot mean he was transported into the presence of God to abide with Him forever, because the fifty sons of the prophets looked for Elijah for three days in the rocky slopes. If II Kings 2:11 meant that Elijah went “straight up,” the fifty sons of the prophets would never have looked for him on the land. “And Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven” means that God took Elijah. Elijah died away from Elisha and the fifty prophetic sons and is buried awaiting the resurrection.

Moses and Elijah were shown to Jesus and His three companions in a vision; the real persons did not appear because they were both dead and awaiting the resurrection.

CHAPTER SIX

By Faith Enoch Was Translated

(*HEBREWS 11:5*)

The complication in examining the death of Enoch stems from the word *translated*. Some people claim that Enoch never saw death because God translated him directly to heaven. The record itself is given in Hebrews 11:5.

By faith* Enoch was translated that he should not see death; and, was not found, because God had translated him; for before his translation he had this testimony, that he pleased God.

The word *translated* is the word *transported* or *trans-*

**Believing* should be the translation of the Greek word *pistis* throughout Hebrews 11. Since *pistis* may be translated “faith” or “believing,” only the context and time determine its proper usage. Because faith came with Jesus Christ (Galatians 5:24, 25) and there was only believing before His coming, all believers mentioned in Hebrews 11 having lived before Jesus Christ, could not have *pistis*—faith, but *pistis*—believing.

*ferred** meaning “taken from one place to another.” He was not taken from one spot *up* to another place; he was taken from one place *over* to another “. . . that he should not see death. . . .”

The word *see* is *eidon*, which means “to look at with actual perception with one’s eyes” or literally “to see someone die.” In checking the Old Testament, one discovers that Enoch had never seen anybody pass away.† He pleased God all the time. For this fidelity God so loved Enoch that God took him from the place where Enoch’s loved ones would pass on and put him at a place where he could not literally see them die. Enoch did not see anyone else die, but he himself died. The Bible says so in Hebrews 11:5: “By faith Enoch” verse 7 says, “by faith Noah”; verse 8 says, “by faith Abraham”; and verse 11 says, “through faith also Sara. . . .” Then in verse 13, after listing Enoch, Noah, Abraham, and Sara, Hebrews 11:13 says, “These all died. . . .” *All* without exception died. If they all died, then Enoch is dead.

Sensitives, mediums, and spiritualists who want us to

*To this day in ecclesiastical circles when a priest in the Episcopal, Anglican, or Roman faith is consecrated as a Bishop, he is also translated. According to succession he might be consecrated Bishop of Antioch, Jerusalem or Ephesus—yet never residing in those cities, perhaps never even having visited those cities. But being consecrated as a Bishop of Antioch he would be translated to New York. Translated means the Bishop is given an assignment or is transferred to New York. Crockford’s clerical dictionary, London, lists for instance, all the consecrated Bishops and the locations as to where they were translated. The word *translated* is used of each Bishop.

†Enoch is mentioned at the following places in the Bible: Genesis 5:21-24; Hebrews 11:5; Jude 14.

believe we are surrounded with a great cloud of living witnesses continue to propagate error by reading into Hebrews 12: 1.

Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses. . . .

People who wrongly divide The Word say that the “cloud of witnesses” is composed of believers who died and are king in heaven. That is not what Hebrews 12:1 says. The cloud of witnesses is composed of the people listed in Hebrews 12 who believed God and of whom the Word of God says, “These all died . . .” Although these people are dead, we are still surrounded with their example of trusting God. We have the testimony of their believing which is encouraging for us to observe though they themselves are dead.

CHAPTER SEVEN

Lazarus in Abraham's Bosom

(LUKE 16:19-31)

Luke 16 contains the record of Lazarus in Abraham's bosom. This passage of Scripture, like the others examined in this study, has been used to teach that immediately after death one is alive and is forthwith judged.

LUKE 16:19:

There was a certain rich man, which was clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day:

VERSE 20:

And there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, which was laid at his gate, full of sores,

VERSE 21:

And desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table: moreover the dogs came and licked his sores.

VERSE 22:

And it came to pass, that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom: the rich man also died, and was buried;

VERSE 23:

And in hell [*hadēs*] he lift up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom.

VERSE 24:

And he cried and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame.

VERSE 25:

But Abraham said, Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things: but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented.

VERSE 26:

And beside all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed: so that they which would pass from hence to you cannot; neither can they pass to us, that *would come* from thence.

VERSE 27:

Then he said, I pray thee therefore, father, that thou wouldest send him to my father's house:

VERSE 28:

For I have five brethren; that he may testify unto them, lest they also come into this place of torment.

VERSE 29:

Abraham saith unto him, They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them.

VERSE 30:

And he said, Nay, father Abraham: but if one went unto them from the dead, they will repent.

VERSE 31:

And he said unto him, If they hear not Moses and the prophets neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead.

We must note first of all that this Scriptural passage is a parable, which again is a figure of speech. In fact, in two ancient Greek manuscripts—the Bezae Caulabrigensis and the Koridethian-Caesarean text—words are included which have been deleted in other translations. Both of these ancient manuscripts begin Luke 16:19 with the words: *eipen de kai heteran parabolēn*, which translated means, “And He said also another parable.”

A parable is a comparison by sustained resemblance. A parable is an extended simile: the resemblance is usually in one specific characteristic. The likeness or resemblance must always be sought from the essence of the entire context. The confusion and misunderstanding of the parable in Luke 16 lies in the Pharisaic beliefs. Luke 16:14 indicates that this parable is addressed to the Pharisees. So Jesus wisely judged the Pharisees out of their own mouths, from their own vantage point, for the Pharisee believed in rewards and punishments immediately upon death as so many believe today. This parable does not say that Jesus believed in immediate rewards

and punishments after death; this is what the Pharisees believed. Jesus uses this parable to condemn the Pharisees and to catch them in their own erroneous beliefs.

This passage in Luke a 6 must be interpreted in accordance with the great quantity or mass of Scriptures. One cannot reject the one hundred clear passages and accept the one seemingly contradictory one. Jesus could not have denied Ecclesiastes 9.

VERSE 4:

For to him that is joined to all the living there is hope: for a living dog is better than a dead lion.

VERSE 5:

For the living know that they shall die: but the dead know not any thing, neither have they any more a reward; for the memory of them is forgotten.

VERSE 6:

Also their love, and their hatred, and their envy, is now perished; neither have they any more a portion for ever in any *thing* that is done under the sun.

Jesus Christ could not have contradicted the Word of God in John 11.

VERSE 11:

These things said he: and after that he saith unto them, Our friend Lazarus sleepeth; but I go, that I may awake him out of sleep.

VERSE 12:

Then said his disciples, Lord, if he sleep, he shall do well.

VERSE 13:

Howbeit Jesus spake of his death: but they thought that he had spoken of taking of rest in sleep.

VERSE 14:

Then said Jesus unto them plainly, Lazarus is dead.

Jesus could not have been more explicit than when He said, "... Lazarus is dead."

Luke 14:14 also plainly teaches about death and resurrection.

And thou shalt be blessed; for they [the dead, the lame, the blind,] cannot recompense thee: for thou shalt be recompensed at the resurrection of the just.

How could Jesus in one place talk about people being recompensed at the resurrection of the just and yet teach that there is an immediate reward or punishment after death?

Although Luke 16 must be understood as a parable, further clarity is achieved with a more accurate translation of verses 22 and 23.

VERSE 22:

And it came to pass, that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom: the rich man also died, and was buried; also in hell [*hadēs*, the grave].

The first three words of verse 23 "And in hell . . ." belong as the last words in verse 22. The word "and"

must be translated “also.” Verse 23, begins with the words:

. . . he [the rich man] lifted up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom.

Now this is a perfect parable. The misunderstanding of Luke 16 has been read into it by people who try to literalize the parable. Jesus was addressing His illustration to an indicated group of people and was wisely able to trap them in their own snare of unbelief—“If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead.” Abraham, Lazarus, and the rich man were not literally alive in *hadēs*; they, as all others, are literally dead until the resurrection. These three people were simply figuratively used to make a striking impact on the criticizing Pharisees.

CHAPTER EIGHT

The Malefactor and Paradise

(LUKE 23:42 AND 43)

The sixth Scripture under examination is found in Luke 23. This passage pertains to the statement of the one malefactor at the time of Jesus’ crucifixion.*

LUKE 23:42:

And he said unto Jesus, Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom.

VERSE 43:

And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, To day shalt thou be with me in paradise.

First of all note that Jesus says, *paradise*, not *heaven*. From the Septuagint the word “paradise,” *paradeisos*,

*Victor Paul Wierwille, *Studies in Abundant Living*, Vol. III (The American Christian Press of The way, Inc., New Knoxville, Ohio 45871), has a complete presentation of “The Four Crucified With Jesus.” Also see the study of “The Third Earth,” by the same author.

is translated “Eden” 16 times and “garden” 19 times. *Paradeisos* is never used in the Bible in any other sense than that of a place of beauty and delight *upon* earth. Paradise never refers to any place above the earth or under it.

Paradise is described in Genesis 2 in its pure state, which purity was lost according to Genesis 2 with the entrance of Satan and the pronouncement of the curse. The restoration of paradise is never cited, as far as regaining and enjoying it, until after the last enemy, death, is destroyed. After death has been destroyed, there will be a new heaven and the new earth as recorded in Revelation 22 when Satan shall be bound and the Lord Himself shall reign in His Kingdom.

REVELATION 22:1:

And he shewed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb.

VERSE 2:

In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, *was there* the tree of life, which bare twelve *manner* of fruits, *and* yielded her fruit every month: and the leaves of the tree *were* for the healing of the nations.

VERSE 3:

And there shall be no more curse: but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and his servants shall serve him:

VERSE 4:

And they shall see his face; and his name *shall be* in their foreheads,

VERSE 5:

And there shall be no night there: and they need no candle, neither light of the sun; for the Lord God giveth them light: and they shall reign for ever and ever.

VERSE 14:

Blessed *are* they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city.

VERSE 17:

And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.

These verses describe the restoration of paradise which was lost and which will not be reestablished until all the prophecies of Revelation have come to pass. Thus when we read in Luke 23:43, “And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, To day shalt thou be with me in paradise,” a glaring contradiction is exposed. If this malefactor could have been with Jesus on “this day,” then paradise had to be available at that particular time. Paradise had. to be here on earth on that day. The Word of God teaches that paradise was lost with man’s sin recorded in Genesis 3. Furthermore, The Word teaches that paradise will not be restored until Revelation 22

is fulfilled, and the last enemy, death, is destroyed. How could this malefactor be with Jesus in paradise *that day* when Jesus and he were both dying and death was an imminent reality?

Return to Luke 23:42: "And he [the malefactor] said unto Jesus, Lord remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom." To have a kingdom there must be a king, for the word *kingdom* means "the reign of a king." The King of the Kingdom of heaven was crucified; thus the Kingdom from then until now is in abeyance and will not be reestablished upon the earth until after the return of Christ and the two resurrections. With the building of the New City, the New Jerusalem upon earth, paradise will be restored.*

The malefactor's request was important and his request was accurate. The circumstances under which the words were uttered indicate the wonderful believing of the dying malefactor. The answer Jesus gave was also very important. The word "verily" spoken by Jesus points to the earnestness and gravity of the occasion. On this very day when everything seems to be defeated, instead of the Kingdom being established and Jesus Christ reigning, He was dying a very infamous death.

Then the following verse, verse 43 in Luke 23, has brought about misconceptions through punctuation errors. In the older texts there were no commas so transla-

*The Kingdom of God is not upon earth now because the present earth is not perfect. The Kingdom of God is the over-all rule of God in heaven and upon earth when both are perfect and complete.

tors put commas to fit their theology: ". . . Verily I say unto thee, To day shalt thou be with me in paradise." In the midst of an excruciating moment, Jesus turned to the malefactor and said to him, "Verily I say unto thee this day, thou shalt be with me in paradise." The comma must come after the word "day." There was no paradise "to day," but there will be paradise in the new heaven and the new earth. On the day of Jesus' crucifixion that malefactor died upon the cross and the malefactor's body saw corruption; but God will raise him at the resurrection. That is why he *will be*—at a future time—with Jesus Christ in paradise.

There is further proof of the accuracy of the Word of God according to Hebrew tradition. Whenever the Hebrews desired to emphasize an occasion by making a solemn statement, they would express themselves by use of the idiom, "I say unto thee this day." For examples:

DEUTERONOMY 6:6:

And these words, which I command thee this day. . . .

DEUTERONOMY 7:11:

Thou shalt therefore keep the commandments, and the statutes and the judgments, which I command thee this day. . . .

DEUTERONOMY 8:1:

All thee commandments which I command thee this day . . .

DEUTERONOMY 9:3:

Understand therefore this day . . .

DEUTERONOMY 10: 13:

. . . which I command thee this day for thy good?

DEUTERONOMY 11:2:

And know ye this day . . .

“This day” or “today” was always used to give emphasis to very solemn expression.

The Lord answered the request of a dying believer, not by promising something for which the malefactor did not ask, but by granting him his desire and the request of his lips.

Malefactor: “Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom.”

Jesus: “Verily I say unto thee this day, thou shalt be with me in paradise.”

One of the ancient Syriac Gospels discovered at Mt. Sinai further corroborates this accuracy when it states, “Art thou not the Saviour? Save thyself alive today, and also us.” The other malefactor said, “. . . Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom.” And Jesus said unto him, “Verily I say unto thee this day, thou shalt be with me in paradise.”

The Lord in His reply to the believing malefactor takes the word “today” to indicate that today was not the day of deliverance for either Himself or others. For Him and the others on the cross that day, it was the day of death. But, on that day of death, Jesus Christ gave the

promise of future glory which will come after the resurrections when paradise will again be reestablished. In His statement to the dying malefactor, Jesus Christ gave the assurance of the future glory of the Kingdom upon earth.

CHAPTER NINE

The Woman Who Had Seven Husbands

(MATTHEW 22:23-32)

Another entanglement relating to “Are the Dead Alive Now?” has stemmed from the Sadducees’ approaching Jesus with a hypothetical situation about a woman who had in succession seven husbands. The complete record is told in Matthew 22.

VERSE 23:

The same day came to him the Sadducees, which say that there is no resurrection, and asked him,

VERSE 24:

Saying, Master, Moses said, If a man die, having no children, his brother shall marry his wife, and raise up seed unto his brother.

VERSE 25:

Now there were with us seven brethren: and the first, when he had married a wife, deceased, and, having no issue, left his wife unto his brother:

VERSE 26:

Likewise the second also, and the third, unto the seventh.

VERSE 27:

And last of all the woman died also.

VERSE 28:

Therefore in the resurrection whose wife shall she be of the seven? for they all had her.

VERSE 29:

Jesus answered and said unto them, Ye do err, not knowing the scriptures, nor the power of God.

VERSE 30:

For in the resurrection they neither marry, nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels of God in heaven.

VERSE 31:

But as touching the resurrection of the dead, have ye not read that which was spoken unto you by God, saying,

VERSE 32:

I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob? God is not the God of the dead, but of the living.

The last phrase of verse 32 is so often used at funerals to prove that the dead are immediately with the Lord for “. . . God is not the God of the dead, but of the living.”

Let us note the background of the situation recorded here. First of all, the Sadducees, with whom Jesus was conversing, did not believe in the resurrection. So they

are skeptically cross-examining Jesus. From verse 24 on, the Sadducees build a hypothetical case about a woman who has been married to many husbands. They culminate their inquest of Jesus in verse 28, “Therefore in the resurrection whose wife is she going to be?” In verses 29 and 30 “Jesus answered . . . Ye do err, not knowing the scriptures, nor the power of God” to raise the dead. “For in the resurrection they neither marry, nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels of God in heaven.”

In verse 31 Jesus continues the discussion, no longer speaking of the hypothetical case but of the resurrection: “But as touching the resurrection of the dead . . .” The resurrection of whom? The dead who have been dead since the time they died. “But as touching the resurrection of the dead, have ye not read that which was spoken unto you by God, saying, I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob? God is not the God of the dead, but of the living.”

How could this argument prove that the dead would be resurrected if it meant that the dead were already alive? If Abraham is alive now, then no resurrection is needed. The conclusion is perfectly clear. If God is the God of the living, then the dead Abraham must live again. If He is the God of the living, then the dead Isaac must live again and the dead Jacob must live again. All are dead now but they must live again. When? In the resurrection. The context focuses on the resurrection.

God is not the God of the dead, which He would be if there were no resurrection, for Abraham, Isaac and Jacob are dead; but God is the God of the living—those who will be made alive at the time of the resurrection and not before then.

CHAPTER TEN

The Prophetess of Endor

(I SAMUEL 28:7–32)

Many people who have erroneously taught that the dead are not dead but alive after death use as their Scriptural proof the episode of King Saul and the prophetess of Endor. To understand the circumstances surrounding the meeting of Saul and the woman of Endor, a great deal of background is needed.* I Samuel 15 gives the account of King Saul's rejection by God after the battle with the Amalekites.

I SAMUEL 15:23:

For rebellion *is as* the sin of witch craft, and stubbornness *is as* iniquity and idolatry. Because thou has rejected the word of the Lord, he hath also rejected thee from *being* king.

* Read I Samuel 15 noting especially verses 3, 9, 13, 14, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 26, 29, 35; chapter 16, verses 1–14, especially verses 13, 14; chapter 28, verses 3–20; chapter 31, verses 1–6.

VERSE 24:

And Saul said unto Samuel, I have sinned: for I have transgressed the commandment of the Lord, and thy words: because I feared the people, and obeyed their voice.

Satan had worked through people to destroy Saul and cause him to sin. Saul was now Satan's man and Satan could carry out his evil intentions without God's intervention. It is only when we *will* to belong to God that Satan cannot be certain of the outcome, for the Lord watches over His own.

Later in chapter 15, King Saul's former friend and prophet, the man who anointed Saul as king, breaks off relations with Saul.

I SAMUEL 15:35:

And Samuel came no more to see Saul until the day of his [Samuel's] death. . . .

Thus, without a relationship with God or Samuel, King Saul is beside himself.

I SAMUEL 16:14:

But the Spirit of the Lord departed from Saul, and an evil spirit from the Lord [the lord of this world, Satan] troubled him.

Between I Samuel 16 and I Samuel 28 much commotion intervened. Samuel anointed David as king and then soon Samuel died.

I SAMUEL 28:3:

Now Samuel was dead, and all Israel had lamented him, and buried him in Ramah, even in his own city. And Saul had put away those that had familiar spirits, and the wizards, out of the land,

VERSE 4:

And the Philistines gathered themselves together, and came and pitched in Shunem: and Saul gathered all Israel together, and they pitched in Gilboa.

VERSE 5:

And when Saul saw the host of the Philistines, he was afraid, and his heart greatly trembled.

VERSE 6:

And when Saul enquired of the Lord, the Lord answered him not, neither by dreams, nor by Urim, nor by prophets.

Saul had lost all communications with the True God. Although Saul tried, his efforts could not restore the lost connection. So in desperation, after, as told in verse 3, having put away all those with familiar spirits, Saul in verse 7 demands to have personal audience with such a person.

I SAMUEL 28:7:

Then said Saul unto his servants, Seek me a woman that hath a familiar spirit, that I may go to her, and enquire of her. And his servants said to him, Behold, *there is* a woman that hath a familiar spirit at Endor.

Having lost his connection with God through disobedience to God's Word, Saul grasps for suggestions

from Satan. Satan put ideas into Saul's mind because he knew that he could influence Saul through a familiar spirit, and thus not only cause Saul's death, but the death of Saul's sons, the destruction of the army of Israel, and misfortune to the entire nation.

I SAMUEL 28:8:

And Saul disguised himself, and put on other raiment, and he went, and two men with him, and they came to the woman by night: and he said, I pray thee, divine unto me by the familiar spirit, and bring me *him* up, whom I shall name unto thee.

VERSE 9:

And the woman said unto him, Behold, thou knowest what Saul hath done, how he hath cut off those that have familiar spirits, and the wizards, out of the land: wherefore then layest thou a snare for my life, to cause me to die?

VERSE 10:

And Saul sware to her by the Lord, saying, As the Lord liveth, there shall no punishment happen to thee for this thing.

VERSE 11:

Then said the woman, Whom shall I bring up unto thee? And he said, Bring me up Samuel.

VERSE 12:

And when the woman saw Samuel, she cried with a loud voice: and the woman spake to Saul, saying, Why hast thou deceived me? for thou *art* Saul.

VERSE 13:

And the king said unto her, Be not afraid: for what sawest thou? And the woman said unto Saul, I saw gods ascending out of the earth.

VERSE 14:

And he said unto her, What form *is* he of? And she said, An old man cometh up; and he *is* covered with a mantle. And Saul perceived that it was Samuel, and he stooped with *his* face to the ground, and bowed himself.

VERSE 15:

And Samuel said to Saul, Why hast thou disquieted me, to bring me up? And Saul answered, I am sore distressed; for the Philistines make war against me, and God is departed from me, and answereth me no more, neither by prophets, nor by dreams: therefore I have called thee, thou mayest make known unto me what I shall do.

VERSE 16:

Then said Samuel Wherefore then dost thou ask of me, seeing the Lord is departed from thee, and is become thine enemy?

VERSE 17:

And the Lord bath done to him, as he spake by me: for the Lord hath rent the kingdom out of thine hand, and given it to thy neighbour, *even* to David:

VERSE 18:

Because thou obeyedst not the voice of the Lord, nor executedst his fierce wrath upon Amalek, therefore hath the Lord done this thing unto thee this day.

VERSE 19:

Moreover the Lord will also deliver Israel with thee into the hand of the Philistines: and to morrow *shalt* thou and thy sons *be* with me: the Lord also shall deliver the host of Israel into the hand of the Philistines.

VERSE 20:

Then Saul fell straightway all along on the earth, and was sore afraid, because of the words of Samuel: and there was no strength in him; for he had eaten no bread all the day, nor all the night.

To understand this phenomenal occasion, one must know that anything that has been manifested and is known in the senses world is accessible to Satan's knowledge. All the salient facts listed in I Samuel were well known to Satan. The seance with the woman of Endor as only the climax of the deceiving power of Satan working *through* a woman who was *possessed* and *controlled* by a specific kind of evil spirit called a familiar spirit. These evil spirits are called "familiar" because they are well aware of and acquainted with all that has happened in a person's earthly life in the senses world.

The one fact to keep uppermost in our minds is that Satan *always* produces a counterfeit, never a genuine. A counterfeit always resembles the genuine so perfectly that only a qualified person in that certain field can distinguish between them. Therefore, Satan's deceit can often be so effective,

Satan can imitate and counterfeit anything so long as

he is familiar with the original. Satan has access to the knowledge of everything that a man does while on earth. Satan knew all about Samuel: what he looked like, how he dressed, what his voice sounded like, what he had said and done, and so on. Thus Satan used the prophetess of Endor who had a familiar spirit, a spirit obedient to the woman's own beck and call, to counterfeit Samuel by materialization and impersonation. Not one fact in I Samuel 28 brings out any evidence which Satan could not know about Saul's person and circumstance for all these things had been told before except for Saul's death, and death is of Satan anyway.

Samuel himself never appeared in Saul's seance with the prophetess of Endor. Samuel was dead and will not be alive until the resurrection; but the woman of Endor, being controlled by a "familiar," evil spirit, impersonated the dead Samuel by materialization to the satisfaction of Saul and Satan.

If the dead are not dead then Satan is not counterfeiting the reappearance of the dead if and when he materializes them. But, if the dead stay dead until the return or the resurrections, then Satan simply is impersonating the departed dead by familiar spirits who dwell in people's minds, operating and controlling the individual they possess even to the end of using their vocal organs, and changing the possessed-one's physical appearance. By these imitative means Satan tries to deceive the very elect of God. Since the dead remain dead until the re-

Satan's impersonations are all frauds, the work of familiar spirits.

If the dead are alive, then their reappearance or materialization is not caused by devil spirits. But, if the dead are dead and stay dead until the return, then anyone who claims to the contrary or supposedly reproduces them in any way is absolutely a fraud. Such acts are perpetrated by Satan himself in order to deceive and to cause people to worship and obey him.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

Conclusion

No passage of Scripture teaches that there is conscious existence after death. To teach and believe that man does not really die, but only "crosses the bar," entering a higher plane of life in existence with God, is propagating Satan's original lie in Genesis when he said, "Ye shall not surely die." The teaching that when a person dies he immediately goes to God in heaven is one of the many doctrines of Satan and his fallen angels. Such erroneous thinking can be inspired only by Satan and believed and taught by broken-down clerical institutions and by all other religions which are inaugurated and formed by natural man, and directed by Satan.

Men do die and remain dead until the future release with the gathering together and the resurrections. All shall then be made alive.

Death for the believer is referred to as falling asleep because in sleep there is an awakening point. But for the unbeliever, the Christ-rejector, the ungodly, their resurrection is temporary for they shall meet a second and final death.

If we desire to be with the Lord, if we want to have a place in heaven, if we are concerned about seeing men and women in heaven—our neighbors, our children, our loved ones—we as Christians must carry out the ministry of reconciliation and the work of apostles, prophets, evangelists, teachers, and pastors, as ambassadors of the Lord Jesus Christ. We must carry the Gospel to the lost so that men and women may be born again of God's Spirit. We must show our concern as God showed His.

JOHN 3:16:

For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish [by death], but have everlasting life.

This everlasting life is through Him who said to Martha as recorded in John 11.

VERSE 25:

. . . I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live [When? At the resurrection.]:

VERSE 26:

And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die [After the resurrection]. Believest thou this?

Revelation 21 describes the resurrection glory of the New Jerusalem for the saints of God who became alive and changed with the return of Christ.

REVELATION 21:1:

And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea.

VERSE 2:

And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.

VERSE 3:

And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God.

VERSE 4:

And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away.

Since we believers have this promise of the future glory, let us obey the commandment of I Corinthians 15:58.

Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, foras-

much as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.

The reason our labor is not in vain is that Christ did arise, He will return, and we shall be released from the jaws of death to enjoy life everlasting.

PART III

APPENDIX

Because of limited time and space, an exhaustive appendix is not in order. Several subjects and words, however, warrant closer scrutiny; these subjects and words are herein examined and documented in more detail than they were in the body of this study.

APPENDIX I

The Difference Between “To Kill” and “To Destroy”

APPENDIX II

Body, Soul, and Spirit; Formed, Made, and Created

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APPENDIX I

THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN “TO KILL” AND “TO DESTROY”

Matthew 10:28 is a Scripture used to propagate the teaching of the immortality of the soul immediately after death.

And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell [*gehenna*].

Matthew 10:28 basically deals with two actors—man and Satan. Let us compare the corresponding Scriptural reference of Luke 12:4 and 5.

VERSE 4:

And I say unto you my friends, Be not afraid of them that kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do.

VERSE 5:

But I will forewarn you whom ye shall fear: Fear him, which after he hath killed hath power to cast into hell; yea, I say unto you, Fear him.

Fear is the Greek word *phobēthēte*, Hebrew, *yare*. Note Deuteronomy 1:29 Psalms 27:1; Jeremiah 1:8.* The verse in Jeremiah is most enlightening for it teaches plainly that we are not to be “afraid of their faces,” meaning their rank, station, or position.

Power (Luke 12:5) is *exousia*, meaning “authority” or “delegated power.” Adam had been given the rulership, authority, power, dominion, over all of God’s creation, according to Genesis 2:28. In Luke 12:5, *exousia* belongs to Satan because original rulership was delivered unto him by Adam in his disobedience according to Luke 4:6.†

Man can do no more to another man than to kill life; but Satan cannot only *kill* a life; he can also *destroy* a life so that in the future that man will not be with the Lord because that man died unsaved. If a natural man remains unsaved, Satan will have succeeded in not only killing but in destroying that man.

Remember Hebrews 2:14 explicitly states that he who has the power of death is the devil. Since Satan has this power, he endeavors to so mange life in the here-and-now for a man that at death the man is still unsaved and consequently will enjoy no future glory.

A literal translation of Matthew 10:28 correlated with the record from Luke 12:4 and 5 is:

* Deuteronomy 1:29. “Then I said unto you, Dread not, neither be afraid of them.”

Psalms 27:1, “The Lord *is* my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? the Lord *is* the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?

Jeremiah 1:8, “Be not afraid of their faces: for I am with thee to deliver thee, saith the Lord.

†”And the devil said unto him, All this power will I give thee, and the glory of them: for that is delivered unto me; and to whomsoever I will I give it.”

Be not terrified of those whose hands are able to kill your body, who after your death can do no more to you. But, be alert, because you know the terrifying result of the one, the devil, who has the authority to cast (destroy) the total natural (unsaved) man of body and soul over the brink of destruction into the continual fires of the refuse.

APPENDIX II

BODY, SOUL, AND SPIRIT— FORMED, MADE AND CREATED

When one does not understand the distinct difference among these words: body, soul, spirit, formed, made and created, he falls easily into confusion. Biblically these words are used with precision and are not synonymous and/or interchangeable.

ISAIAH 43:7:

Even every one that is called by my name: for I have created him for my glory, I have formed him; yea, I have made him.

I THESSALONIANS 5:23:

And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and *I pray God* your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

For clarification let us look at three verses from Ecclesiastes.

ECCLESIASTES 3:21:

Who knoweth the spirit of man that goeth upward, and the spirit of the beast that goeth downward to the earth?

ECCLESIASTES 8:8:

There is no man that hath power over the spirit to retain the spirit; neither hath he power in the day of death . . .

ECCLESIASTES 12:7:

Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it.

In bringing about mankind, God proceeded as follows: He *formed the body* of man (Genesis 2:7); He *made* the soul of man (Genesis 2:7); and God *created* man in His own image which is spirit (Genesis 1:27 and John 4:24).

God formed the body of man of the same substance or elements that one finds in the “dust of the earth.” All substance eventually returns to its original state and the body therefore goes back to dust.*

The soul is the “breath of life” of man (Genesis 2:7), and the life of the soul is in the blood (Leviticus 17:11). A man of body and soul is called in the Bible the natural man, the man of the flesh, the carnal man. The soul is also called the “spirit of man” for the soul is physical life and is frequently referred to as “spirit” in its generic usage.

All life is spirit, but not all life is *eternal-life* spirit. Soul life is spirit but not eternal; but the spirit from God in a man is eternal-life spirit. Soul life is the spirit of man which is passed on at the time of ovum fertilization, which event begins the life of a new organism, the end result being

* Genesis 3:19: “In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return.”

an offspring. Soul is attested to by breathing. When breathing ceases, soul life is no more.

All living animals have a soul. In Genesis 1:20 and 30, “life” is the word for *soul*. In Genesis 1:21 and 24, “creature” is also the word *soul*.

In Ecclesiastes 3:21 the “spirit of man” and the “spirit of the beast” is breath life, the soul, as is also the word “spirit” in Ecclesiastes 8:8. Can anyone see breath life? When one dies does the last breath go upward or downward? Does a man’s last breath go up and the beast’s go down? How do you know when you cannot see it? We do know that no man can stop the last breath from leaving; and when breath is gone, soul life for that person or beast is gone.

Soul life continues by being passed on to one’s progeny. God made soul life only once in the original man and has never made it again in man. That same soul life is in all men today having been passed down from one generation to the next. Acts 17:26 says, “And hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation.”

In Ecclesiastes 12:7 “spirit” is *not* soul life—the spirit of man; it is the Spirit of God. God created man in His own image, and the image of God is Spirit.† God as Spirit can communicate with spirit only, the same as senses-communication is related only by way of the senses. The spirit which God originally created in man was given on a condition.‡

* Except in the case of His only begotten Son Jesus Christ, for whom He created soul life in Mary.

† John 4:24: God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship *him* in spirit and in truth.”

‡ Genesis 2:16, 17: “And the Lord God commanded the man, saying. Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: But of the tree

When man did not fulfill God's conditions, man sinned and was then dead in trespasses and sin without God. God had revoked His gift of spirit and therefore could no longer communicate with man unless God chose to come into concretion in one form or another in the senses realm.

In not fulfilling the conditions which God had prescribed, man became a two-fold being of just body and soul. He became then a natural man limited to information gathered by his senses. Physical man looked the same both before and after he lost the spirit, but he was not the same. Man had lost his direct communication with God and, consequently, had to live solely with the faulty aid of his five senses.

After the original fall of man, God's gift of spirit was at times put on some men by God for a special mission at a special time, and even then the spirit was on them only "in measure," to a limited degree. Never did God fully put His gift of spirit in men until the day of Pentecost. All of the prophets in the Old Testament had this special anointing "in measure"; * but on the day of Pentecost, every believer for the first time could have the spirit from God born within, so man could again become a tripartite being of body, soul, and spirit. This anointing with spirit from God places the believer again in the position where God can communicate directly with tripartite man. At the time of death, this spirit returns to God who gave it.

Thus as the *body* is *formed* of dust, it must, according to all laws of life, return to dust. The *soul* was *made* in the

of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die."

* Deuteronomy 54:9: "And Joshua the son of Nun was full of the spirit of wisdom; for Moses had hid his hands upon him: and the children of Israel hearkened unto him, and did as the Lord commanded Moses."

blood and becomes non-existent with a man's last breath (except in offsprings). The *spirit* from God is *created* in the believer and at the end of natural life this created spirit must return to God of whom it is a part.

APPENDIX III

SHEOL AND HADES; QEBER AND MNEMEION

The Hebrew word *sheol* as “gravedom” is translated by three English words in the King James Version:

“Hell” thirty-one times: Deuteronomy 32:22; II Samuel 22:6; Job 11:8; 26:6; Psalms 9:17; 16:16; 18:5; 55:15; 86:13; 116:3; 139:8; Proverbs 5:5; 7:27; 9:18; 15:11, 24; 23:14; 27:20; Isaiah 5:14; 14:9, 15; 28:15, 18; 57:9; Ezekiel 31:16, 17; 32:21, 27; Amos 9:2; Jonah 2:2; Habakkuk 2:5.

“Grave” thirty-one times: Genesis 37:35; 42:38; 44:29, 31; I Samuel 2:6; I Kings 2:6, 9; Job 7:9; 14:13; 17:13; 21:13; 24:19; Psalms 6:5 30:3; 31:17; 49:14, 14, 15; 88:3; 89:48; 141:7; Proverbs 1:12; 30:16; Ecclesiastes 9:10; Song of Solomon 8:6; Isaiah 14:11; 38:10, 18; Ezekiel 31:15; Hosea 13:14, 14.

“Pit” three times: Numbers 16:30, 33; Job 17:16.

The Greek word *hades* as “gravedom” is translated by two English words in the King James Version:

“Hell” ten times: Matthew 11:23; 16:18; Luke 10:15; 16:23; Acts 2:27, 31; Revelation 1:8; 6:8; 20:13, 14.

“Grave” one time: I Corinthians 15:55.

The Hebrew word *qeber*, a burying place for dead bodies, is translated by six English words in the King James Version:

“Grave” twenty-three times: Genesis 35:20, 20; 50:5; Numbers 19:16, 18; II Samuel 3:32; 19:37; I Kings 13:30; 14:13; II Kings 22:20; II Chronicles 34:28; Job 3:22; 5:26; 10:19; 21:32; Psalms 88:5, 11; Isaiah 14:19 53:9; Jeremiah 20:17; Ezekiel 32:23, 24; Nahum 1:14.

“Graves” sixteen times: Exodus 14:11; II Kings 23:6; II Chronicles 34:4; Job 17:1; Isaiah 65:4; Jeremiah 8:1; 26:23; Ezekiel 32:22, 23, 25, 26; 37:12, 12, 13, 13; 39:11.

“Burial” four times: II Chronicles 26:23; Ecclesiastes 6:3; Isaiah 14:20; Jeremiah 22:19.

“Burying place” seven times: Genesis 23:4, 9, 20; 47:30; 49:30; 50:13; Judges 16:31.

“Sepulchre” nineteen times: Genesis 23:6; Deuteronomy 34:6; Judges 8:32; I Samuel 10:2; II Samuel 2:32; 4:12; 17:23; 21:14; I Kings 13:22, 31; II Kings 9:28; 13:21; 21:26; 23:17, 30; Psalms 5:9; Isaiah 22:16, 16; Jeremiah 5:16.

“Sepulchres” twelve times: Genesis 23:6; II Kings 23:16; II Chronicles 16:14; 21:20; 24:25; 28:27; 32:33; 35:24; Nehemiah 2:3, 5; 3:16.

The Greek word *mnēmeion* as a burying place for dead bodies is translated by six English words in the King James Version:

“Grave” four times: John 11:17, 31, 38; 12:17.

“Graves” five times: Matthew 27:52, 53; Luke 11:44; John 5:28; Revelation 11:9.

“Tomb” two times: Matthew 27:60; Mark 6:29.

“Tombs” five times: Matthew 8:28; Mark 5:2, 3, 5; Luke 8:27.

“Sepulchre” thirty times: Matthew 27:60; 28:8; Mark 15:46; 16:2, 3, 5, 8; Luke 23:53, 55; 24:1, 2, 9, 12, 22, 24; John 19:41, 42; 20:1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 8, 11; Acts 2:29; 7:16; 13:29.

“Sepulchres” three times: Matthew 23: 29; Luke 11 :47, 48.

APPENDIX VI

THANATOS, TARTARUS, GEHENNA, ABADDON, ABUSSOS AND LAKE OF FIRE

The natural end of life, *thanatos*, is the state of man brought about by sin. It is used in the following places in the King James Version:

Matthew 4:16; 10:21; 15:4; 16:28; 20:18; 26:38, 66; Mark 7:10; 9:1; 10:33; 13:12; 14:34, 64; Luke 1:79; 2:26; 9:27; 22:33; 23:15, 22; 24:20; John 5:24; 8:51, 52; 11:4, 13; 12:33; 18:32; 21:19; Acts 2:24; 13:28; 22:24; 23:29; 25:11, 25; 26:31; 28:18; Romans 1:32; 5:10, 12, 14, 17, 21; 6:3, 4, 5, 9, 16, 21, 23; 7:5, 10, 13, 13, 24; 8:2, 6, 38; I Corinthians 3:22; 11:26; 15:21, 26, 54, 55, 56; II Corinthians 1:9, 10; 2:16; 3:7; 4:11, 12; 7:10; 11:23; Philippians 1:20; 2:8, 27, 30; 3:10; Colossians 1:22; II Timothy 1:10; Hebrews 2:9, 9, 14, 14, 15; 5:7; 7:23; 9:15, 16; 11:15; James 1:15; 5:20; I John 3:14, 14; 5:16, 16, 17; Revelation 1:18; 2:10, 11, 23; 6:8, 8; 9:6, 6; 12:11; 13:3; 18:8; 20:6, 13, 14, 14; 21:4, 8.

Tartarus is used only once—in II Peter 2:4—for hell:

For if God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast *them* down to hell [*tartarōsas*], and delivered *them* into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment.

I Peter 3:18–20 and Jude 6 must be taken into consideration with II Peter 2:4. Only the evil spirits that corrupted the earth before the flood are the so-called “imprisoned spirits.”* *Tartarus* denotes the bounds or limits of those evil spirits. In II Peter 2:4 the word for “hell,” *tartarōsas*, is a nominative singular masculine participle in the first aorist tense meaning a one-time (once and once only) action with continuing results.

Gehenna is used twelve times in Scripture and is always translated “hell,” a place of torment: Matthew 5:22, 29, 30; 10:28; 18:9; 23:15, 33; Mark 9:43, 45, 47; Luke 12:5; James 3:6.

Abaddon is a Hebrew word translated “destruction” in Job 26:6; 28:22; 31:12; Psalms 88:11; Proverbs 15:11; 27:20.

Abussos is a Greek word which is translated “deep” in Luke 8:31; and Romans 10:7, and “bottomless pit” in Revelation 9:1, 11; 11:7; 17:8; 20:1, 3. (This word is transliterated into English “abyss.”)

The abyss is a place of torment where some devils are now confined. Devils begged Christ not to send them to the abyss or to torment them before their time. (Matthew 8:29; Mark 5:7; Luke 8:26–31.)

* Victor Paul Wierwille, *The Lord's Brethren and Sons of God* (The American Christian Press of The Way, Inc., New Knoxville, Ohio 45871).

Twice the spirit of Antichrist is spoken of as coming out the bottomless pit. (Revelation 11:7; 19:8.)

The abyss is the prison where Satan and his angels will be bound for a thousand years in chains. (Revelation 20:1–7.)

The lake of fire is found five times: Revelation 19:20; 20:10, 14, 15, 21:8. There is no record of anyone being in the lake of fire now. Check Revelation 19:20; 20: 10–15.

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About Victor Paul Wierwille

Victor Paul Wierwille has spent many years seeking enlightenment on God's Word from men of God scattered across the continent. His academic career after high school continued at the Mission House (Lakeland) College and Seminary where he received his Bachelor of Arts and Bachelor of Divinity degrees. Dr. Wierwille studied at the University of Chicago and at Princeton Theological Seminary where he was awarded the Master of Theology degree in Practical Theology. Later he completed his work for the Doctor of Theology degree.

For sixteen years Dr. Wierwille served as a pastor in northwestern Ohio. During these years he searched the Word of God for keys to powerful, victorious living. Dr. Wierwille visited E. Stanley Jones and studied his Ashram program. Such men as Glenn Clark, Rufus Mosley, Starr Daily, Albert Cliff, Bishop K. C. Pillai and others were guests Dr. Wierwille's local congregation. Karl Barth of Switzerland was a friend and consultant, as is George M. Lamsa, the Aramaic scholar, as well as

other European and Far Eastern scholars. With these men Dr. Wierwille quested for Biblical enlightenment. In 1953 he began teaching classes on Power for Abundant Living. These concentrated sessions are specifically directed to unfold the Word of God as the Will of God and to answer crucial questions regarding the Holy Spirit and its present availability and efficacy in believers' lives. Leading men and women from all over the world into receiving the more abundant life quickly consumed Dr. Wierwille's full time, so it became necessary for him to resign his local pastorate. For twenty years Dr. Wierwille has devoted his entire energy to teaching the accuracy of God's Word by establishing The Way Biblical Research Center Headquarters in New Knoxville, Ohio, and its outreaches throughout the United States, Europe and other places of growing interest in the world.